

February 13, 1986 LB 144

that 350 million they are talking about is the money wagered on horses. Wager is a funny word, it also means gambled or gambling on horses. But that is one thing I guess you kind of learn to expect down here, that a lot of times people from...

SENATOR MARSH: Time, Senator Pappas.

SENATOR PAPPAS: ...the news media talk on both sides. So I'd urge you not to vote for the kill motion and wait until Senator Labedz's comes up.

SENATOR MARSH: Senator Barrett.

SENATOR BARRETT: Thank you, Madam President and members. In spite of Senator Pappas's protests, I believe that this bill should be killed, just as I believe that a similar bill should have been killed a year ago. I believe it was the ancient Greeks who said that if you want to destroy man give him everything he wants. History, it seems to me, is nothing more than a record of those people who are trying to get a free lunch, as it were. We see it happening in here nearly every day. Lotteries, like other forms of gambling, in my opinion, appeal to the instinct of greed, and they rely on the weaknesses of one group of people to relieve the tax burden of others. I think, today, we again stand on the brink, at least in my opinion, of a most unwanted influence if the video lottery games are approved by this Legislature under the auspices of either state control or local control, it makes no difference to me. As has been suggested so many times, it simply is not the proper function of government to cater to people's weaknesses by sponsoring and promoting video slot gambling. This is not the proper function of state government or local government for that matter. I always have thought, perhaps mistakenly so, mistakenly so perhaps, that the proper function of government is to promote the health and the safety and the welfare of its people, the public. Should that still be the case, I fail to understand how this issue, the promotion of video slot gambling, is going to promote the health and the welfare of the people of the State of Nebraska, I simply cannot comprehend. On the contrary, it would seem to me to be disruptive and counterproductive. The real issue today is not local option. The real issue today is the video slot machines, the electronic gambling industry, whether it should be allowed at the local level to finance state